

# The Health Care Monitor

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**TRICARE Northwest Region now includes TRICARE Alaska.**

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## TRICARE Northwest



(From left) Brig. Gen. Kenneth L. Farmer Jr., Lead Agent TRICARE NW Region, Lt. Gen James T. Hill, I Corps Headquarters Ft. Lewis Commander, Dr. William Winkenwerder, Jr., Assist. Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and Dr. David S. Chu, Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness met with February 28 at Madigan Army Medical Center for the purpose of familiarizing with TRICARE NW region's operations and current initiatives. (Photo by: Susie Stevens, TRICARE NW Region Marketing)

## March HBA course Ft. Lewis

TRICARE Northwest, will conduct the TRICARE Basic (HBA) course here from March 26-28 2002 (0800 to 1630 hrs daily) at the Ft Lewis Golf Course.

You can register at: <http://tricarenw.mamc.amedd.army.mil/conf/basic/default.htm>. For additional information call (253) 968-3795.





## Naval Hospital Bremerton News

# Hospital adopts Baby—Grand!



Capt. Christine Hunter, commanding officer Naval Hospital Bremerton thanks Mrs. Lillian Callaway for her donation to the hospital of a baby-grand piano. (Photo by PH3 Rachel Bonilla)

By JUDITH ROBERTSON  
Naval Hospital Bremerton PAO

A brass plaque affixed to the beautiful mahogany baby grand pi-

ano now sitting on the Quarterdeck of the Naval Hospital states. "In memory of my loving husband Calvin C. Callaway, CWO, USN, 1922-1946, Yorktown Survivor -- Donated by Lillian Callaway."

But here's the rest of the story. Making a move to a smaller home is not always an easy choice. Sometimes it means parting with things that no longer fit. But Lillian Callaway found a way to smooth the transition and pay tribute to her late husband at the same time. And Naval Hospital Bremerton was the grateful recipient of her decision.

Lillian wanted some way to recognize her late husband who spent 24 years in the Navy retiring as a Chief Warrant Officer. "And loved every minute of it," Callaway said,

who then decided the perfect way to honor her husband and his Navy career would be by donating her piano to the hospital in his name.

But on reflection Callaway decided that her piano, although too big for her new apartment, was too small to be the tribute she wanted for Calvin. So she traded it in for a baby grand and gave it to the hospital instead.

"This is so far beyond anything I ever imagined," said Hunter at the dedication ceremony. "Everyone in this community is so very generous, but I never, ever expected anything like this. It is just so generous and thoughtful of you. I'm so thankful to you."

"Just enjoy it," Callaway said.

## Sports Medicine Class learns from Naval Hospital



X-ray tech HM1 (FMF) Scott Staley explains the workings of the X-ray table to Central Kitsap High School students (from left to right) Amanda Quintera, Kristel Rosales and Roschelle Wurr.



Sylvia Florez-Milsom the mammographer at the Naval Hospital shows Rosalie Rojo, a student from Central Kitsap High School the operations of the mammography machine. (All Photos by PH3 Rachel Bonilla)

**Toll Free Numbers for Contacting the VA for general information about your benefits:**  
**1-800-827-1000**

**Health Care Benefits: 1-877-222-8387**

Source of information: Veterans Administration web site, <http://www.va.gov> and <http://www.va.gov/vbs/health/> This list of numbers has been modified to include just a few of the phone numbers on their website.

**Helpful VA  
toll free phone  
numbers**

## 92nd MG honors years best Airmen

**FAIRCHILD AFB**—These servicemembers were among the honorees of the 92d Medical Group who were chosen as 2001 annual award winners.

These are a couple of the people who daily are helping to keep the promise of TRICARE Prime by maintaining the standard of excellence in the delivery of health care services to our military's men, women and families in this TRICARE region.



NCO of the Year  
Staff Sgt. Amy Hunter  
Health Care Coordinator



Airman of the Year  
Senior Airman Kandi King  
Medical Readiness Technician

## Study underscores importance of handwashing

By: Lt. K. Nowak, RN,MN  
Naval Hospital Oak Harbor

Here, clinics are busy caring for patients who have viral illnesses. Experts in Preventive Medicine agree that something as simple as washing one's hands could help prevent such illnesses.

One common way a person can get a viral illness is by touching his/her nose, eyes, or mouth after his/her hands get contaminated with a virus. People can also spread germs directly to others by touch. It's important to remember that some very serious diseases – like hepatitis A, meningitis, and infectious diarrhea – can be prevented if people wash their hands routinely.

### Facts

95% of American

adults say they wash their hands after using public restrooms. However, in a recent study, only 67% actually did. Here are how residents of different cities weighed in.

- New York: only 49% washed after using a restroom in Grand Central/Penn Station.
- Chicago: 83% washed after using a public restroom.
- San Francisco: 80% washed after using a public restroom
- New Orleans & Atlanta: tied at 64% for hand washing.

The same study revealed that women wash their hands more often than men. In Atlanta, 84% of women at a Brave's baseball game washed their hands while only 36% of the men did! Interestingly, Americans with

college degrees are less likely than those without college degrees to say they wash their hands.

### The Bottom Line

Remember, "hand washing is the simplest, most effective thing people can do to reduce the spread of infectious diseases," according to officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition to preventing the spread of infections, regular hand washing can reduce the spread of antibiotic-resistant bacteria.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the Preventive Medicine Department at 257-5950. For more information and free downloadable 8.5" x 11" full color posters for your home or work site, try logging on

to one of these sites:

Henry the Hand:  
[www.henrythehand.com](http://www.henrythehand.com).  
This is a kid-friendly site.

American Society of Microbiology: [www.washup.org](http://www.washup.org)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:  
[www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op/handwashing)

The Soap and Detergent Association: [www.cleaning101.com](http://www.cleaning101.com)

The Sope Project:  
[www.sope.net](http://www.sope.net).





## DOD TRICARE Plays big role in Homeland Security

By Gerry J. Gilmore  
American Forces Press Service

**WASHINGTON** -- TRICARE personnel and assets are playing a big part in DoD's preparedness plans in support of other federal, state and local emergency medical response teams in dealing with possible terrorist acts committed on American soil, a senior DoD official said here today.

Ellen P. Embrey, DoD's new deputy assistant secretary of defense for force health protection and readiness, outlined the president's homeland security goals and plans and steps participants of the annual TRICARE conference here can take to support them. She advises the assistant secretary of defense for health affairs on all DoD medical readiness and deployment medicine policies and activities, and national medical disaster support.

"As the direct provider of beneficiary care and a respected military health professional in your local community, you will be asked to participate in local, city, county or statewide disaster and terrorism emergency management contingency planning and exercise ac-

tivities," she said.

Former Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge, director of the Office of Homeland Security, coordinates and implements national homeland security strategy, Embrey noted.

In his fiscal 2003 budget request, she said, President Bush called for \$38 billion to support homeland secu-

attendees the first two objectives are relevant to them and DoD. First responders -- local police, firefighters and civilian and military emergency medical professionals -- "have the greatest potential to save lives and limit casualties after a terrorist attack," she explained.

On the second objec-

Almost \$2 billion is being proposed to bolster state and local public healthcare systems, Embrey said, to manage both contagious and noncontagious diseases, to expand health care surge capacities, to upgrade public health laboratory capabilities, and to provide training for medical personnel.

Funds are also provided, she added, to support mutual regional medical aid agreements and communications networks linking acute care assets, including military, with local communities' public health organizations.

Embrey said the military stands ready to assist. Its emergency response capabilities include the Army's Chemical/Biological Rapid Response Team, Technical Escort Units, the Marine Corps' Chemical/Biological Ready Response Force, and the National Guard's Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support teams.

The president and Congress, she said, have also taken steps to create national supplies of smallpox vaccine and an anti-



Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf (right) responds to a reporter's question during a joint press conference with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld (left) in the Pentagon on Feb. 13, 2002. Musharraf and Rumsfeld met earlier to discuss the war on terrorism and defense issues of mutual interest. (DoD photo by Helene C. Stikkel)

urity efforts contained in four key objectives: support first responders first; defend against bio-terrorism; secure America's borders; and use 21st century technology to secure the homeland.

Embrey told conference

tive, current homeland security plans recognize that bio-terrorism defense will require the nation to invest significantly in its healthcare system, "of which you are a critical part," Embrey told attendees.

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biotics stockpile to treat potential anthrax victims.

"Our success or our failure as a nation to respond to bio-terrorism will depend in large measure on the quality and effectiveness of our diagnostic tests, vaccines

and therapeutic drugs," Embrey noted.

She said military commanders depend on TRICARE health care professionals' plans and preparations for possible bio-terrorism attacks -- and "don't underestimate their need to rely on you," she

told conferees.

"The chemical and biological agent awareness training, personal protective equipment stocks, medical supplies needed to support chemical/biological wartime support operations are (what) your installation com-

mander wants you to have ready in case of a potential attack," she added.

Embrey said TRICARE personnel also could be called to help in local relief efforts.

## Fleet Hospital Bremerton tests operational readiness

By JO1(SW) Stacey Moore  
Photo by PH3 Rachel Bonilla  
PAO Office NHB

While most medical professionals have the luxury of stability in their job requirements and workplace, the men and women of Fleet Hospital Bremerton must be prepared to deploy on a moment's notice. They must be ready to take their training into the field to complete missions in both peace time and in war. The day to day work of medicine in the hospital keeps the staff's skills sharp for the possibility of deployment, but extra training is necessary for the deployable unit.

Each year, the FHB corpsmen, nurses and doctors travel to the Fleet Hospital Operational Training Command site at Camp Pendleton, Calif. to learn to build, stock and staff a field hospital.

Every third year, the exercise changes to the Operational Readiness Evaluation (ORE). This is the year of the ORE. Upon completion, FHB will be the ready-up unit for the West Coast and on the list to deploy.

Tomorrow morning, long before most people even think about waking up the fleet hospital personnel will load up to depart for their ORE.

At the ORE, the FHOTC will task the unit to prove they are prepared to become the ready fleet hospital. The unit must use their training to show they are able to quickly deploy, build a fleet hospital from the ground up and prepare to effectively treat casualties within just a few days.

"We should feel very confident we'll succeed. We want to be the tier one, ready fleet hospital," said

Capt. Patrick Kelly, Commanding Officer of Fleet Hospital Bremerton during his brief to the troops. "We look forward to the ORE as a test that will improve our readiness and make us more prepared, operationally savvy unit."



## Annual Physical Medicine Conference March 2002

**Madigan Army Medical Center** is hosting its annual Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation conference March 26-29, 2002 in Tacoma, Washington at the Sheraton Hotel.

The conference is for Physiatrists and physicians in related specialties; however, all medical professionals interested in these topics are invited to attend.

The course program and registration information for the conference can be accessed on the web at [www.hjf.org](http://www.hjf.org) or call (253)-968-2020.

Corpsmen and medical staff from Fleet Hospital Bremerton line up for training on how to don gas masks as part of their Operational Readiness Evaluation. (Photos by PH3 Rachel Bonilla)

# TRICAREOnline offers customer choice

TRICARE Online ([www.TRICAREOnline.com](http://www.TRICAREOnline.com)) is available now in this region for registration purposes only. The online appointment service is expected to go "live" as early as this month. Please look for a public notice in military base newspapers and Military Treatment Facility hospital daily bulletins for the announcement that TRICARE Online has gone "live" in this region. When the web-site here does go "live" it will initially only allow TRICARE beneficiaries enrolled in a Washington state Military Treatment Facility to book routine and follow-up appointments online with their Primary Care Manager or team. Of course, a person can always continue to make their appointments by phone as well. No specialty appointments will be booked initially using TRICARE Online.

**Please call if you have any questions or difficulties using TRICARE Online Department of Defense's toll free number: 1-866-363-3932. Do not contact the TRICARE Appointment Center (TRAC). TRAC personnel cannot an-**

**swer TRICARE Online user questions.**

TRICARE beneficiaries enrolled in a Washington state MTF may register for the online ser-



vice now, creating their own personal online account. If you have any difficulty registering please check your Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting data to ensure it is current and accurate. You can do this by calling DEERS at 1-800-538-9552. You may update DEERS by going to your nearest Military Identification Card Section. Please make an appointment before traveling to your nearest military post to update DEERS to ensure you can get prompt service. Any mistake in your DEERS information will prevent you from registering suc-

cessfully.

Each family member can also be registered which can be very helpful when keeping track of family medical informa-

tion care. Other features of TOL will include:

- All registered users can visit TRICARE Online to keep personal health journal. This secure page can be used to record health care data, such as current treatment, immunizations, prescribed medications and past medical procedures.

- By using their secure password to access this health journal, beneficiaries can retrieve their personal health care information online from any location – even when they are moving, traveling or away from home on temporary assignment.

- All TRICARE benefi-

ciaries can also use TRICARE Online to obtain information about their TRICARE benefits and services, check medications for possible adverse reactions and access 18 million pages of consumer health information from a trusted source.

Additional services are currently being developed for TOL use. In the future, TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Plus beneficiaries will be able to refill prescriptions, receive reminders of appointments and request routine medical tests. Eventually, TRICARE Online will provide a secure channel for patients and their providers to communicate via e-mail.

After the tests are successful, TRICARE Online will be offered to TRICARE beneficiaries worldwide within about a year.

TRICARE Online is being designed with the military health care beneficiary in mind. For further information visit TRICARE Online on the Web at [www.TRICAREOnline.com](http://www.TRICAREOnline.com). Or call their toll free number 1-866-363-3932.